

Health Issues in West Africa

Course number:

Language of instruction: English

U.S. Semester Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 42

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Course Description

Health as per the World Health Organization is viewed from a bio-psychosocial perspective. This course, which concerns itself with health issues in Africa with special reference to Ghana focuses largely on the social aspects of health. It uses sociological lenses to examine mental disorder. It introduces the student to the major health issues and discourses in Africa with particular emphasis on Ghana. It introduces the student to the ways social theories inform our understanding of health. The course examines how socio-cultural factors contribute to the development of health and ill-health in Ghana and Africa as a whole. This course is suitable for students in Pre-Med, Public Health, Social Work and students in International Development.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify some of the major health issues confronting Ghana and other African countries.
2. Discuss how socio-cultural issues contribute to morbidity and mortality in Ghana.
3. Discuss health and illness using different social theories.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Learning will involve in-class exercises, active reflection, discussion, readings, field reports, short lectures, and out-of-class activities that help you engage in the local culture on a deeper level.

Class Schedule

Following is the course schedule for the semester, subject to change.

Class 1: Key concepts in healthcare delivery

The field of health and healthcare organisation involves a myriad of concepts and constructs. The first session of this course explains some of these concepts, looking at the various perspectives that can be brought to them. The aim of the session is to set stage for subsequent discussions in the sessions that follow. Concepts such as health, illness, ‘access to health’, universal healthcare among others are discussed.

Key text:

Amzat, J., & Razum, O. (2017). *Towards a sociology of health discourse in Africa (Chapter 1)*. Cham: Springer.

Class 2: Social theories of health

The discipline of sociology is characterised by two main aspects, namely, the capacity to take an individual’s experience or behaviour and place it within a wider socio-cultural milieu; and the ability to view a phenomenon from different theoretical perspectives. In this session, we look at how the major sociological theories help us explain different aspects of health, illness and illness experience. Some of the theories that are discussed in relation to health are Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Symbolic Interactionism.

Key texts:

Grbich, C. (2004). Theoretical Perspectives in Health Sociology. In C. Grbich (Ed.), *Health in Australia: Sociological concepts and issues* (3rd ed.). NSW: Pearson.

Cockerham, W. C. (2007). *Medical Sociology* (10th ed.) (Chapter 7). New Jersey: Pearson.

Class 3: The Medical systems in Ghana:

- a. Allopathic and Complementary/Alternative Medicine

Key text:

Twumasi, P. (1975). *Medical Systems in Ghana (Chapter 5)*. Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Class 4: Ghana: Traditional medicines and Faith Healing (history, practices, challenges)

Key texts:

Gyasi, R. M., Poku, A. A., Boateng, S., Amoah, P. A., Mumin, A. A., Obodai, J., & Agyemang-Duah, W. (2017). Integration for coexistence? Implementation of intercultural health care policy in Ghana from the perspective of service users and providers. *Journal of integrative medicine*, 15(1), 44-55.

Barimah, K. B. (2016). Traditional healers in Ghana: So near to the people, yet so far away from basic health care system. *TANG*, 6(2), 3-8.

Kpobi, L. N., Swartz, L., & Omenyo, C. N. (2019). Traditional herbalists' methods of treating mental disorders in Ghana. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 56(1), 250-266.

Kpobi, L., & Swartz, L. (2019). Indigenous and faith healing in Ghana: A brief examination of the formalising process and collaborative efforts with the biomedical health system. *African journal of primary health care & family medicine*, 11(1), 1-5.

Class 5: Out of Class Activity: A visit to CSRPM, Mampong (modern traditional), or a Herbalist (Students write a minimum 5-page reflective paper on this activity to submit on the next class meeting)

Class 6: Structure of Biomedical Healthcare Delivery in Ghana

Key text:

Twumasi, P. (1975). *Medical Systems in Ghana*. Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Class 7: Care and caregiving in Ghana: Orphanages

Key Texts:

Abdullah, A., Cudjoe, E., & Manful, E. (2018). Barriers to childcare in Children's Homes in Ghana: Caregivers' solutions. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 88, 450-456.

Darkwah, E., Daniel, M., & Asumeng, M. (2016). Caregiver perceptions of children in their care and motivations for the care work in children's homes in Ghana: Children of God or children of white men? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 66, 161-169.

Darkwah, E., Daniel, M., & Yendork, J. S. (2018). Care-'less': exploring the interface between child care and parental control in the context of child rights for workers in children's homes in Ghana. *BMC international health and human rights*, 18(1), 13.

Eliasu, A. (2017). Child Care Centres as Welfare Institutions in the Northern Region of Ghana: Orphanages in Perspective. *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*, 14(2). doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/gjds.v14i2.12

Manful, E., & Abdullah, A. (2018). Conceptualisation of child neglect: A Ghanaian practice narrative. *International Social Work*, 0020872818810382.

Class 8: Care and caregiving in Ghana: Social Welfare

Key texts:

Frimpong-Manso, K., & Mawudoku, A. K. (2016). Social work practice in child and family welfare in Ghana. In *The handbook of social work and social development in Africa* (pp. 128-139): Routledge.

Manful, E., & Cudjoe, E. (2018). Is kinship failing? Views on informal support by families in contact with social services in Ghana. *Child & Family Social Work*, 23(4), 617-624.

Class 9: Care and caregiving in Ghana: Care for the Aged

Key texts:

Aboagye, G. K. (2019). A statement on interventions to cater for the aged in Ghana by Hon. George Kwame Aboagye, MP for Asene Akroso Manso constituency.

Coe, C. (2018). Imagining institutional care, practicing domestic care: Inscriptions around Aging in Southern Ghana. *Anthropology & Aging*, 39(1), 18-32.

Coe, C. (2017). Negotiating eldercare in Akuapem, Ghana: care-scripts and the role of non-kin. *Africa*, 87(1), 137-154.

Doh, D., & Adusei-Asante, K. (2016). *Active ageing with the African in mind: An interpretive phenomenological analysis*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference.

Doh, D. (2017). Towards active ageing: A comparative study of experiences of older Ghanaians in Australia and Ghana.

Frimpong, J. A. (2015). Social support for the aged: The role of private care homes in Accra. *University of Ghana*.

Kpessa-Whyte, M. (2018). Aging and demographic transition in Ghana: State of the elderly and emerging issues. *The Gerontologist*, 58(3), 403-408. Care and Caregiving in Ghana

Class 10: ***Group presentations on assigned topics by professor.***

Class 11 and 12: Gender and Health

Key texts:

Ameyaw, E. K., Tanle, A., Kissah-Korsah, K., & Amo-Adjei, J. (2016). Women's health decision-making autonomy and skilled birth attendance in Ghana. *International journal of reproductive medicine*, 2016.

Boafo, I. M. (2011). Dating violence and condom use self-efficacy: a study of school-going adolescents in Cape Town. *IFE Psychologia*, 19(2), 296-320.

Boafo, I. M., Dagbanu, E. A., & Asante, K. O. (2014). Dating violence and self-efficacy for delayed sex among adolescents in Cape Town, South Africa. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 18(2), 46-57.

Issahaku, P. A. (2015). Health implications of partner violence against women in Ghana. *Violence and victims*, 30(2), 250-264.

Saeed, B., Yawson, A., Nguah, S., Agyei-Baffour, P., Emmanuel, N., & Ayesu, E. (2016). Effect of socio-economic factors in utilization of utilization of different healthcare services among older adult men and women in Ghana. *BMC health services research*, 16(1), 390.

Class 13: Social Class and Health

Key Texts:

Abeka-Nkrumah, G. (2018). Are the poor getting worse off? A decomposition of inequality in under-five malnutrition over time and space in Ghana. *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 15(2), 1-30.

Atinga, R. A., Bawole, J. N., & Nang-Beifubah, A. (2016). 'Some patients are more equal than others': Patient-centred care differential in two-tier inpatient ward hospitals in Ghana. *Patient education and counseling*, 99(3), 370-377.

Age and Health

Overview:

Age is arguably one of the important factors in the formation of personal identity. It can be an important source of self-esteem as well as social categorization and discrimination. The link between age and health is a complex one. Like other social determinants of health, age may interact in complex ways with many other factors to produce particular health outcomes. While studying age and health is often taken to mean studying the elderly, this session on age and health is divided into three main sub-sessions to take care of in fact and children's health, adolescent health and the health of the elderly. The first sub-session discusses infant and child mortality and the socio-cultural factors that influence these in developing countries in general and Ghana in particular. The second sub-session looks at adolescents' health, especially their sexual reproductive health and discusses the factors that promote and those inhibit this. Issues of sexual and reproductive health needs and access to services and stigmatization are discussed under this sub-session.

Class 14: Infant Mortality and Childhood Killer Diseases

Key texts:

Acheampong, G. K., & Avorgbedor, Y. E. (2017). Determinants of under Five Mortality in Ghana; A Logistic Regression Analysis Using Evidence from the Demographic and Health Survey (1988-2014). *American Journal of Public Health*, 5(3), 70-78.

Adam, A. (2016). Gender differentials and disease-specific cause of infant mortality: a case study in an urban hospital in Accra, Ghana. *African journal of reproductive health*, 20(2), 104-110.

Case, K. L. (2017). Factors That Have Influenced Infant and Maternal Mortality in Ghana: A Review.

Kayode, G. A., Grobbee, D. E., Koduah, A., Amoakoh-Coleman, M., Agyepong, I. A., Ansah, E., Klipstein-Grobush, K. (2016). Temporal trends in childhood mortality in Ghana: impacts and challenges of health policies and programs. *Global health action*, 9(1), 31907.

Wak, G. (2017). *Maternal Migration and Under-Five Mortality in The Kassena-Nankana Municipality and Kassenanankana West District Of Northern Ghana*. University of Ghana,

Class 15: Out of Class Activity-Visit a health centre and interact with Paediatricians and Paediatric Nurses

Class 16: Adolescent Reproductive Health and STI'S including HIV/AIDS

Key texts:

Aniteye, P., & Mayhew, S. H. (2019). Globalisation and transitions in abortion care in Ghana. *BMC health services research*, 19(1), 185.

Gyan, S. E. (2018). Passing as “Normal”: Adolescent Girls’ Strategies for Escaping Stigma of Premarital Sex and Childbearing in Ghana. *SAGE Open*, 8(3), 2158244018801421.

Thatte, N., Bingenheimer, J. B., Ndiaye, K., & Rimal, R. N. (2016). Unpacking the barriers to reproductive health services in Ghana: HIV/STI testing, abortion and contraception. *African journal of reproductive health*, 20(2), 53-61.

Class 17: Age and Health: Health of the aged in Ghana

Key texts:

Adei, D., Anning, A., & Mireku, S. (2015). Basic needs for the aged in selected districts in Ashanti region of Ghana. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(2), 92-108.

Ampomah Gyamfuah, I., Kumi-Kyereme, A., Darteh, E., & Addo, I. (2015). Perceptions of the aged about traditional and modern medicines in Yamoransa, Ghana. *Journal of community health*, 40(2).

Awoke, M. A., Negin, J., Moller, J., Farrell, P., Yawson, A. E., Biritwum, R. B., & Kowal, P. (2017). Predictors of public and private healthcare utilization and associated health system responsiveness among older adults in Ghana. *Global health action*, 10(1), 1301723.

Wu, F., Guo, Y., Chatterji, S., Zheng, Y., Naidoo, N., Jiang, Y., Salinas-Rodriguez, A. (2015). Common risk factors for chronic non-communicable diseases among older adults

in China, Ghana, Mexico, India, Russia and South Africa: the study on global AGEing and adult health (SAGE) wave 1. *BMC Public Health*, 15(1), 88.

Class 18: Maternal Mortality

Overview:

All over the developing world, maternal mortality remains one difficult health problems that has defied several solutions. The difficulty lies in the fact that maternal mortality is the result of a combination of cultural, social, economic and political factors. In this session, we discuss the clinical causes and maternal mortality and the socio-cultural factors that fuel maternal mortality in Ghana. The session also reviews some of the governmental interventions that have been set in place to deal with the phenomenon.

Key texts:

Atuoye, K. N., Dixon, J., Rishworth, A., Galaa, S. Z., Boamah, S. A., & Luginaah, I. (2015). Can she make it? Transportation barriers to accessing maternal and child health care services in rural Ghana. *BMC health services research*, 15(1), 333.

Ganle, J. K., & Dery, I. (2015). 'What men don't know can hurt women's health': a qualitative study of the barriers to and opportunities for men's involvement in maternal healthcare in Ghana. *Reproductive health*, 12(1), 93.

Ganle, J. K., Obeng, B., Segbefia, A. Y., Mwinyuri, V., Yeboah, J. Y., & Baatiema, L. (2015). How intra-familial decision-making affects women's access to, and use of maternal healthcare services in Ghana: a qualitative study. *BMC pregnancy and childbirth*, 15(1), 173.

Senah, K. (2003). Maternal Mortality in Ghana: the other side. *Institute of African Studies Research Review*, 19(1), 47-56.

Class 19: Malaria: Governments and NGO'S in Malaria Prevention

Key texts:

Asante, K. P., Binka, F. N., & Koram, K. A. (2019). Malaria vaccine deployment in Africa: focus on Ghana. *Ghana Medical Journal*, 53(2), 90-91.

Chukwuocha, U., Okpanma, A., Chukwuocha, A., & Nwakwuo, G. (2015). Social Determinants of Malaria Treatment Seeking Time by Mothers for Children (0-5 Years) in South Eastern Nigeria. *Journal of Tropical Diseases & Public Health*, 2015.

Febir, L. G., Asante, K. P., Afari-Asiedu, S., Abokyi, L. N., Kwarteng, A., Ogutu, B., . . . Owusu-Agyei, S. (2016). Seeking treatment for uncomplicated malaria: experiences from the Kintampo districts of Ghana. *Malaria journal*, *15*(1), 108.

Godly, C., Machief, M. A., Bagula, L. R., Saleh, U. C., & Nggada, H. Y. a. (2018). Knowledge, Attitude and Practices Regarding Malaria Among Residents of Ganye, Adamawa State, North-Eastern Nigeria. *The Nigerian Health Journal*, *17*(4), 148-158.

Kanmiki, E. W., Awoonor-Williams, J. K., Phillips, J. F., Kachur, S. P., Achana, S. F., Akazili, J., & Bawah, A. A. (2019). Socio-economic and demographic disparities in ownership and use of insecticide-treated bed nets for preventing malaria among rural reproductive-aged women in northern Ghana. *PloS one*, *14*(1), e0211365.

Class 20: Mental Health Issues in Ghana Class 24

Key texts:

Arias, D., Taylor, L., Ofori-Atta, A., & Bradley, E. H. (2016). Prayer camps and biomedical care in Ghana: Is collaboration in mental health care possible? *PloS one*, *11*(9), e0162305.

Kpobi, L. N., Swartz, L., & Omenyo, C. N. (2019). Traditional herbalists' methods of treating mental disorders in Ghana. *Transcultural psychiatry*, *56*(1), 250-266.

Class 21: Final Exams